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ABSIRACT

THE RESEARCH STUDY DESCRIBED HERE WAS DESIGNED TC PROVIDE VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE THROUGH STUDENT INVCLVEMENT IN THE VIDEOTAPING CF LIVE OCCUPATIONAL SITUATIONS AND THE LATER SHOWING IN THE CLASSROOM. A MAJOR GCAL OF THE PROGRAM WAS TO IDENTIFY THE FACIORS INVOLVED IN STUDENT DROPCUT SITUATIONS. (FPO)

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE THROUGH VIDEOTAPING AND TELEVISION

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INTRODUCTION

Specialization on a massive scale has led to an extremely affluent American Society. Such an economy holds vast potential for opportunity or for disaster for American Youth. The opportunity for youth to realize their potentials and interests is the goal of vocational guidance and career planning.

Recognition by Sterling Township High School of the complexity of the problem of career planning, led to the formulation of a research study project in vocational guidance. In 1965, the resultant proposal was presented to and accepted by the Research Coordinating Unit, Office of the Superintendent of Schools, State of Illinois, Springfield, Illinois. The project is Vocational Guidance Through Television and Videotaping.

The unique factor of this project is that it combines vocational guidance with educational television facilities. Videotaping crews are mobilized to go into the working world, make tapes of workmen in the

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performance of their jobs, demonstrating the various occupational processes and work opportunities. The videotapes are later transmitted to the student in the classroom through closed circuit television. It is hoped that television, a familiar and accepted friend of this generation, will bridge the communications' gap that seems to exist between youth and the working community.

RESPONSIBILITIES

As developers of this project, we are charged with the responsibility of producing, over a three year period, a series of video programs of occupational opportunities in this community and the surrounding areas. It is hoped that, through the vehicle of television, vocational information will be presented to a student early enough in his school career to help him see the value of staying in school in preparation for his life's vocation. Additionally, it is hoped that this vocational information will assist him in planning his school program effectively and will give him a first-hand experience of what to expect of an occupation.

One wonders how many students drop out of school because they can see no connection between school and real life. Through vocational information and guidance, it is hoped that the student will see that school is pertinent to life, that he can have a sense of pride in his vocational choice, whatever it may be.

Through these programs, the school anticipates assisting students to see where they can fit into our economy and our community, what jobs are and will be available in this area and in the nation as a whole. Our entire industrial system is being revised continuously. There is no place in today's society for those who have no skills.

STUDENTS INVOLVED

Our students are more than casually involved in the complex industrial system of the world of work. These students in just a few years are the employees in these industrial and business concerns. Are they being groomed for their place in society? We hope, through these videotaped programs, to assist in the preparation of these students to meet their specialization needs in our modern industrial society.

Our videotaped programming is geared to boys and girls in the seventh through the twelfth grades. Project findings have pointed out that vocational guidance should be started earlier than high school. Many seventh graders have been thinking about vocations and careers - this is the point in their lives that direction should be given to this thinking. It is our premise that a visual program of many vocational opportunities should be presented to the students through their secondary school years - programs to assist their thinking whatever their vocational interests may be.

This project is directed primarily at the great percentage of students who will not graduate from college, although vocational guidance is valuable to the student who one day will be a college graduate. For all students, whether they be terminal students, high school graduates, or college graduates, it is hoped that the vocational information and guidance will help them choose an occupation intelligently, not fall into a job in a 'happenstance' manner.

EFFECTIVE PROGRAMMING

Since these programs are not geared to a specific age or interest group, the effectiveness of the TV programs must be imaginative and attractive to hold the interest of the overall seven to twelve grade group. At the same time they must be educational and valid as far as the information is concerned. Programming is being scheduled to cover the many types of occupational choices for both girls and boys in meeting their needs and interests.

Videotapes of occupational opportunities can accomplish what no other single medium can do in explaining the facets of vocational guidance - even a personal visit to the business or industry. A tour of a business could possibly get the same information. But what industry or business would or could take the time to conduct many tours. The TV program is the answer to this problem. It can be a distillation of many visits and much investigation and research. Moreover, the information may be presented to several individuals at one time, and, being on tape, it can be repeated to many different groups.

EQUIPMENT INCLUDED

To produce these television programs certain items of equipment are required. Sterling Township High School is most fortunate in having the necessary equipment for this project. The following equipment which permits our personnel to travel to the industries and businesses for the videotaping processes includes, basically:

1. Two television cameras and mounts

2. A mobile panel truck equipped with Conrac video and sound controls, a Miratel monitor, the necessary television accessaries, and an Ampex videotape recorder.

In addition, this school district has a well equipped television studio in the high school available for the use of this project and an Emcee MA 2500 transmitter and modulator.

PROJECT'S MAJOR OBJECTIVES

Through the use of this equipment and with the assistance of the personnel at Sterling Township High School who have the desire to serve the vocational interests of these students, the five main objectives of this project may be attained.

The first of these objectives is to examine the effect that vocational counseling services have in retaining young people in formal school programs. Sterling Township High School secured the services of Dr. Marshall Sanborn, University of Wisconsin, as a consultant to attempt to determine identification factors contributing to the student dropout situation. It is hoped that through the identification of the dropout factors, an intensive guidance program, a concerted effort to establish meaningful programs for students, and positive vocational counseling services, the number of student dropouts will be minimized.

Secondly, the project personnel hope to evaluate the effectiveness of a vocational counseling program in retaining students who have returned to a formal school training program after having been a 'dropout'. We hope to determine, through the project, reasons for dropouts and possible ways of bringing them back into a learning situation.

Another important objective of the project is to institute a follow-up program covering the employment records, salaries, and employers' evaluation to determine if participants in vocational education can find employment and successfully remain and advance in the field for which training was received.

The fourth objective of the project is to bring vocational guidance services to all youths of school age. Recent research indicates that two out of three dropouts exit from school before most occupational and other guidance facets begin to function. The traditional school program is geared to the ability to read and comprehend what he reads. This is important in his fulfillment as an indivudal and his usefulness in society. But it is equally important that the student who is not talented academically live a meaningful and fruitful life. There

is a great need for guidance services and for the development of practical courses that will prepare these students. Further, it is significant to note that the non-intellectual good traits that are essential to the work world, such as cooperation, self-discipline, and dependability, can be fostered in a vocational guidance program.

Probably the major objective is the establishment of the demonstration and research center - the collection and dissemination of information pertaining to vocational guidance through closed circuit television and other media of communication. The students at Sterling Township High School have access to a variety of existing sources for vocational guidance right now: the guidance counselors at Sterling High School, the vocational guidance counselor in the Whiteside Area Vocational Center*, guidance materials in the school and public libraries, and current national, state and local economic and occupational information that is being gathered by the project staff. Adding television to this, as a communicative medium, the student may have the ultimate in vocation guidance sources. Television is certainly the 'display-window' portion of this project. The programs, in addition to being interesting and attractive, must be meaningful and, we hope, fruitful in demonstrating the world of work and its many aspects to the school student.

THE COMMUNITY'S PART

What part has the community taken in this project? Community resources have played and will continue to play a most important role in this project. Local industrial and business concerns have been very instrumental in helping to provide the television equipment. Further assistance will be gained by forming an advisory council to assist in determining the various areas and sequences of study, review the requirements of job descriptions, assist the project members in selecting the personnel to appear in the videotapes and to preview tapes for accuracies.

What should not be left unnoticed in the Community's role is their general interest in the project. An adult class is being organized to instruct interested individuals in both the production and technical phases of television. An area TV station has offered the services of its staff in this instruction phase. Following the study phase, the members of the class will serve as members on TV crews.

SUMMATION

In summary, Sterling Township High School felt the growing need for a

* The Whiteside Area Vocational Center is a vocational school serving eleven high schools in the Whiteside County area, State of Illinois. It is located with and administered by Sterling Township High School.

more intensive and extensive vocational guidance program. This need is incorporated in a project for a functional and feasible school vocational program with the establishment of a demonstration and research center for vocational guidance. The research phase included the examination and study for school students in preparation for their vocational opportunities. The demonstration phase is the medium of videotaping of vocational processes. Sterling Township High School is fortunate in having the educational television facilities available in order to execute the plans.

By the establishment of this demonstration and research center, it is hoped that the project will have some success in motivating young people to stay in school and to think about and prepare themselves for their life's work.